

Action Fiche for Egypt**1. IDENTIFICATION**

Title/Number	Promotion and protection of human rights and civil society in Egypt (ENPI/2008/19607)		
Total cost	EU contribution: EUR 17 million		
Aid method / Management mode	Project approach– decentralised management and joint management with UNDP and UN Women		
DAC-code	15150	Sector	Democratic participation and civil society

2. RATIONALE**2.1. Sector context**

Progress achieved in the promotion human rights in Egypt has been rather uneven. Hopes about democratisation were raised by promises of political reforms announced by President Mubarak during his 2005 presidential campaign. However, the first multi-candidate elections of 2005 had some deficiencies; voter turnout was estimated at only 25%.

Albeit limited, progress has been made in recent years. The Government of Egypt expressed commitment to further strengthen citizens' rights, enlarge women's participation and extend good governance practices. The establishment of the National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) in 2004, the National Council of Women (NCW) in 2001, and the Family Courts are examples of this.

Egypt was elected as member of the UN Human Rights Council on 17 May 2007. In the "voluntary pledges to promote human rights", the country expressed firm commitment to strengthen national human rights and to promote the constructive role of civil society organisations (CSOs). Some activities implemented by CSOs in the past few years have made more citizens aware of their rights, as made evident by recurrent demonstrations organised by unions, factory workers and government employees. Regarding environmental rights, and following the EUR-Med Ministerial Conference held in Cairo in 2006, there is a clear commitment from Government of Egypt to strengthen the dialogue and to develop partnership with civil society. For this purpose Government will further enhance the involvement of CSOs in the protection of the environment.

2.2. Lessons learnt

The project builds on ongoing, successful activities implemented in the framework of the project 'Support to Human Rights, Democratisation and Civil Society', including support to the Ministry of Justice and the Minister of Interior via United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (EUR 2.4 million), Support to the Ombudsman office of the NCW (EUR 0.8 million), Support to the Ombudsman office of the

NCHR (EUR 0.9 million) and to the General Federation of NGOs and Foundations (EUR 0.4 million).

The training for judges and prosecutors on human rights practice and international standards has contributed to the mainstreaming of human rights principles. The project has a groundbreaking and pioneering character and is achieving significant impact also thanks to the wide geographical coverage of the activities. It is worth emphasizing that the training sessions are held not only in Cairo but throughout the country in order to reach the most remote areas.

Furthermore, useful experience has been gained from the Children at Risk project (EUR 20 million), through which the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) was supported.

In the domain of child protection rights, key messages have reached the general public via the Think Twice (TT) initiative, launched in 2003 by UNDP/NCCM. Experience has shown that information and communication need to be linked with concrete initiatives and advocacy at community level, such as the partnership established between the Female Genital Mutilation project, the Free Village Model project and the Think Twice initiative.

The coordination of international donors led by the NCCM is effective at national level, however strengthened coordination mechanisms have to be established at governorate level, mainly between NCHR and NCW.

2.3. Complementary actions

Apart from EU-funded projects, the following donors are already active in the area of human rights: Netherlands and Sweden in Civic Women Education, the UNDP in training of Law Enforcement Agents, the United States of America (USA) in national campaigns and general public awareness and Canada in promoting environmental rights.

2.4. Donor co-ordination

Donor co-ordination is actively pursued in Egypt in the context of the Development Partners Group (DPG) and its nine thematic sub-groups. Co-ordination among the EU Member States is carried out in the context of the meetings of the EU Development Counsellors, in which the EU Member States and the European Commission exchange information on their respective programmes and discuss prospective synergies.

3. DESCRIPTION

The general objective of the programme is to strengthen the respect of human rights and the environment in Egypt.

The specific objective is to increase the capacity of the Government of Egypt's concerned institutions and of civil society organisations (CSOs) in effectively

implementing international conventions related to human rights and the protection of the environment.

Support to civil society organisations will be part of the component III of the programme, so as to enhance their capacity to be active on all these different issues, but also in order to enhance dialogue, understanding and partnership between the targeted institution and civil society.

The programme consists of three components: **Civil and political rights, women and child rights** and **environmental rights**. Five direct beneficiaries are targeted: National Council for Human Rights (NCHR), National Council of Women (NCW), National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) and Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA), CSOs UNDP and UN Women as delegates.

Component I: Civil and political rights

Specific Objectives:

1. Promotion of human rights culture and increasing the efficiency of the NCHR Ombudsman office
2. Awareness-raising of higher education students in human rights and democratic practices.

Expected Results for Specific Objective 1:

- (1) Number of registered complaints presented to the NCHR Ombudsman increased;
- (2) Number of complaints solved by NCHR Ombudsman increased;

Expected Results for Specific Objective 2:

- (1) Human rights principles are gradually incorporated into curricula of primary, secondary and tertiary education.
- (2) Increased awareness of students about human rights and democratic practices;
- (3) Practical learning tools in the area of democracy and human rights are developed (e.g. election/parliamentary exercises).

Activities related to Specific Objective 1:

- (1) Institutional support to NCHR Ombudsman office, improvement of its organizational structure, improvement of the case handling and follow-up and extension of its geographical scope;

Activities related to Specific Objective 2:

- (1) Development of awareness-raising material;

- (2) Organisation of awareness-raising campaigns;
- (3) Organisation of simulation exercises;
- (4) Development of curricula in primary, secondary and tertiary education.

<p>Component II: Women rights and rights of the child</p>
--

<p>Specific Objective: Protection and promotion of women's rights and rights of the child and reduction of violations of vulnerable groups' rights</p>

Expected Results:

- (1) Increased capacity of the NCW Ombudsman to follow up complaints related to the violation of women's rights;
- (2) Strengthened ability of NCCM to plan and implement activities related to children in need of special protection and to coordinate the latter with civil society organisations;
- (3) Improved communication strategy around the activities of NCCM related to the promotion of children's rights;
- (4) Increased awareness about the need to stop the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) and a better mainstreaming of FGM messages disseminated by key stakeholders and integrated in targeted sector policies;
- (5) Increased the participation of women in the reform and democratisation process and empower women to benefit from their political, social and economic rights.

Activities:

- (1) Continued support to NCW Ombudsman office and strengthen its geographical scope;
- (2) Provision of institutional support to NCCM activities for children in need of special protection; development of research and studies related to children in need of special protection; establishment of a permanent platform led by NCCM and organisation, on a regular basis, of workshops on 'Children in need of special protection' at central and governorates' level with both institutions and CSOs;
- (3) Implementation of the integrated communication initiative Think Twice (TT), dealing with the production of educational programmes and the development of an outreach strategy addressing children's and youth rights;
- (4) Advocacy activities targeted at key stakeholders (line Ministries officials, religious leaders, medical and legal staff, youth, etc); organisation of national and local media campaigns to develop information on FGM; incorporation of FGM messages in the curricula and extra curricula activities of primary,

secondary and tertiary schools (Medical Schools, Social Service Schools and Education Schools) in all the concerned governorates;

- (5) Egyptian women's increased leadership and participation in the public sphere, through the award of ID cards for 2 million women; advocacy activities to prevent sexual harassment against girls and women in public spaces; implementation of a women economic empowerment programme

<p>Component III: Environmental rights</p>

<p>Specific Objective: Reinforce the involvement of EEAA and CSOs on environmental issues, planning and implementation.</p>
--

Expected Results:

- (1) Strengthened NGO Unit at the EEAA;
- (2) Environmental action plans are developed and agreed between Government and CSOs;
- (3) Increased role of CSOs active in the field of environment.

Activities:

- (1) Provision of direct institutional support to EEAA at central and local level, so as to develop the ability of its staff in organisational as well as technical matters (human resources management, how to enhance partnership with civil society, communication skills, participative approaches, monitoring and evaluation, environmental rights, etc.); development of national environmental action plans incorporating the views of civil society and implementation at governorates level;
- (2) Support to the activities of CSOs in the implementation of the national environmental action plan.

3.1. Stakeholders

Institutional capacity of direct beneficiaries has been assessed and key areas of action have been identified. All direct beneficiaries have been fully involved and consulted at different levels, both during the identification and the formulation phase. Direct beneficiaries are NCHR, NCW, NCCM, EEAA, Ministry of Higher Education and CSOs. Indirect beneficiaries are Government of Egypt staff, women, children, media and CSOs staff. UNDP will also be a stakeholder for FGM and Integrating Human Rights in Higher Education, and UN Women for Securing and Improving Women's Rights livelihoods.

3.2. Risks and assumptions

Risks

- (1) The programme must be closely monitored taking into account the Egyptians authorities' cautious and sensitive response to external involvement in support of human rights and democratic reform;
- (2) Limited coordination among stakeholders affects programme coherence and implementation, hence the need to provide technical assistance to back up the PIU.

Assumptions

- (1) Participation in calls for proposals has to be open to all Egyptian CSOs;
- (2) Regular resources have to be allocated by Government of Egypt in order to guarantee programme sustainability;
- (3) Low turnover of direct beneficiaries' personnel has to be secured in order to capitalize on the benefit of EU support;
- (4) Involvement of Ministers of, respectively, Higher Education, Interior and Justice at both central and local level;
- (5) Government of Egypt commitment in supporting reforming Family Law,
- (6) Continuous support from the Ministry of Environment on CSOs role and environmental rights promotion.

3.3. Crosscutting Issues

- (1) **Visibility:** EU should maintain a low profile when financing programmes dealing with sensitive issues such as human rights, since high visibility may produce negative effects and EU support may be perceived as interference. This issue will be addressed by the technical assistance in close consultation with the EU Delegation.
- (2) **Gender:** need to secure a balanced participation of men and women in the programme activities to be reflected in grant agreements and call for proposals' guidelines.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Implementation method

The project will be implemented through decentralised management. A financing agreement will be signed with the Ministry for International Cooperation. The Commission controls ex ante the contracting procedures for procurement contracts >50 000 EUR and ex post for procurement contracts ≤ 50 000 EUR. The Commission controls ex-ante the contracting procedures for all grant contracts.

Through the programme estimates, payments are decentralised for operating costs and contracts up to the following ceilings: The Authorising Officer ensures that, by

using the model of financing agreement for decentralized management, the segregation of duties between the authorising officer and the accounting officer of the decentralized entity will be effective, so the decentralization of the payments can be carried out within the limits specified below.

Works	Supplies	Services	Grants
< EUR 300 000	<EUR 150 000	< EUR 200 000	≤ EUR 100 000

Technical assistance, institutional support to stakeholders, human rights/FGMs capacity building and monitoring and evaluation will be implemented through centralised management.

The specific activities mentioned hereafter will be implemented through **joint management** (Article 53d of Financial Regulation) with UNDP.

- Development of curricula in primary, secondary and tertiary education;
- Advocacy activities targeted at key stakeholders (line Ministries officials, religious leaders, medical and legal staff, youth, etc); organisation of national and local media campaigns to develop information on FGM; incorporation of FGM messages in the curricula and extra curricula activities of primary, secondary and tertiary schools (Medical Schools, Social Service Schools and Education Schools) in all the concerned governorates;

The component "Securing and improving women's rights and livelihoods" will be implemented through joint management (art 53d of Financial Regulation) with UN Women.

The prior assessment of the management procedures and structures of UNDP and UN Women have proven satisfactory and thus UNDP and UN Women are eligible to implement as delegatee of the EU under joint management.

4.2. Procurement and grant award procedures

1) Contracts

All decentralised contracts implementing the action must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the Commission for the implementation of external operations, in force at the time of the launch of the procedure in question.

Participation in the award of contracts for the present action shall be open to all natural and legal persons covered by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). Further extensions of this participation to other natural or legal persons by the concerned authorising officer shall be subject to the conditions provided for in the Article 21(7) of the ENPI Regulation.

2) Specific rules for grants

The essential selection and award criteria for the award of grants are laid down in the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions. They are established in accordance with the principles set out in Title VI 'Grants' of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the EU. When derogations to these principles are applied, they shall be justified, in particular in the following cases:

- Financing in full (derogation to the principle of co-financing): the maximum possible rate of co-financing for grants is 80%. Full financing may only be applied in the cases provided for in Article 253 of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the EU.
- Derogation to the principle of non-retroactivity: a grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun only if the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the grant is awarded, in accordance with Article 112 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the EU.

Four direct grants will be awarded to four direct beneficiaries: National Council for Human Rights (NCHR), National Council of Women (NCW), National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) and Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA), as they have exclusive competence in their respective field of activities in Egypt (Article 168 of Implementation Rules). All programme estimates must respect the procedures and standard documents laid down by the Commission, in force at the time of the adoption of the programme estimates in question.

Standard contribution agreements as agreed with the UN under the Framework Agreement (FAFA) will be signed with UNDP and UN Women.

4.3. Indicative budget and calendar

The following is an indicative allocation by components:

Activities	(in EUR)
1. Services:	
Technical Assistance and support to centralised management	1 294 000
Institutional support to direct beneficiaries	4 700 000
Human rights curricula (implementation through UNDP)	2 090 000
FGM capacity building (implementation through UNDP)	3 000 000
Securing and Improving Women's Rights livelihoods (implementation through UN Women)	4 000 000
2. Evaluation /audits/ visibility:	215 000

3. Contingencies:	1 098 000
4. Support to Programme Management Unit	603 000
Total	17 000 000

The programme duration will be 72 months from the date of signature of the Financing Agreement.

4.4. Performance monitoring

The performance will be monitored and evaluated through regular reporting.

Meetings and field visits will be carried out by the EU Delegation in co-ordination with the PMU.

Specific performance indicators are included in the expected results.

4.5. Evaluation and audit

A mid-term and an ex-post independent evaluation will be carried out by the European Commission via a service contract. Every twelve months, the programme shall be subject to an external audit, to be undertaken by independent auditors directly contracted by the European Commission.

4.6. Communication and visibility

Programme visibility will comply with EU guidelines under the guidance of the EU Delegation. Coherence of the contents of the information materials across the different programme components will be secured by the technical assistance information and communication expert in close consultation with the EU Delegation. Operational funds for production of the information material are earmarked in each specific grant agreement with the beneficiaries and in the Evaluation/Audits/Visibility budget line.